



Edelman Press Release

Edelman Trust Data reveals Employee Trust Divide

New research shows that nearly one-in-three employees don't trust their employer. And more than two thirds feel that CEOs are too focused on short-term performance. As a result, employees are far less likely to say positive things about the company they work for.

London, 4 April 2016 - This is the alarming finding of the 2016 Edelman TRUST BAROMETER Special Report on Employee Advocacy. For the first time in the global study's 16-year history, Edelman has examined the state of trust between employers and employees.

For many years, the Edelman Trust Barometer has shown that 'regular employees' are more trusted than CEOs as a source of information about a business. But this potential for brand advocacy is threatened by a significant Employee Trust Divide – revealing a huge challenge for business.

"This is a wake-up call for any business leader who underestimates the importance of building trust with employees," said Nick Howard, executive director of Edelman's employee engagement business in Europe. "Edelman's special report on Employee Advocacy shows that non-trusting employees are far less likely to say good things about their employer. And worryingly, the bad things they say will be believed by consumers."

Howard continued: "Employees are among the most trusted of all company spokespeople – even more than the CEO. The Employee Trust Divide shows there's a missed opportunity for employers to help their employees be powerful, trusted advocates with consumers."

Dr Andy Brown, also Executive Director of Edelman's employee engagement business, led the team that analysed the research findings and identified the attributes of trusted companies.

"The findings are very clear," said Brown. "Consumers trust companies that treat their employees well. Companies that have ethical business practices. Are transparent and open. And respond well to problems and crises. Equally clear is that these are the topics that employees are *most* trusted to talk about."

And what's a major factor influencing whether employees will say good things about their company? Trust in the CEO. "CEOs should be looking at these findings and asking themselves, 'do my employees trust me?'" added Brown.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, consumers and employees feel the same way about CEOs' trust-building attributes.



“More than two thirds of people feel that CEOs are too focused on short-term financial results,” said Howard. “And employees are more likely to advocate for their employer when CEOs have something to say about, and meaningful involvement in, societal issues. In fact, eight out of 10 people say they want this from CEOs.”

It’s not all doom and gloom. As Brown said, “There’s a big upside to all this. If you build trust with your employees, they’ll say good things about you. And when they do, consumers will believe them. Don’t let the opportunity to close your Employee Trust Divide slip by.”

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About Edelman UK

Edelman is a leading global communications marketing firm that partners with many of the world’s largest and emerging businesses and organisations, helping them evolve, promote and protect their brands and reputations. As the number one agency in the UK, a team of brand, reputation and digital strategists drive award winning creative communication programmes. We have deep expertise in consumer trends, research, analytics and insights, corporate reputation, health, technology, crisis, energy, and government affairs.

Edelman has been awarded thirteen Cannes Lions including the Grand Prix for PR in 2014. Edelman has been voted Pan-EMEA Consultancy of the Year at the 2015 Sabre Awards, Global Agency of the Year and Best Agency to work for 2013 by the Holmes Report and International Agency of the Year 2013 by the PRCA and is a 2015 Sunday Times Best Company to Work For. Edelman owns specialty firms Edelman Intelligence (research) and United Entertainment Group (entertainment, sports, experiential), a joint venture with United Talent Agency. Please visit www.edelman.co.uk for further information.

About ENGAGE

ENGAGE is a specialist employee engagement and research business based in London. The firm specialises in people and business analytics, strategy and implementation in three core areas: employee engagement, leadership engagement and communications engagement. ENGAGE has worked with a large number of FTSE 100 and Fortune 500 clients over time, conducting employee research in over 50 countries and working with the CEOs, senior teams and Boards of over 150 clients. The firm is led by Dr Andy Brown, a thought-leader in



employee engagement globally, supported by a mix of researchers, consultants, analysts, project managers and client service professionals.

About the Edelman Trust Barometer

The 2016 Edelman Trust Barometer is the firm's 16th annual trust and credibility survey. The survey was powered by research firm Edelman Intelligence and consisted of 20-minute online interviews conducted on October 13th - November 16th 2015. The 2016 Edelman Trust Barometer surveyed more than 33,000 respondents with an oversample of 1,150 general population respondents ages 18 and over and 500 informed public respondents in the U.S. and China and 200 informed public respondents in all other countries representing 15 percent of the total population across 28 countries. All informed publics met the following criteria: ages 25-64, college-educated; household income.

In the top 25 percent for their age in their country; report significant media consumption and engagement in business news and public policy. The 2016 Trust Barometer UK Supplement was fielded from 11th - 13th January. The survey consists of 1,000 general online population with Informed Publics occurring naturally in the population sample. Additional boost samples of 250 low income households and 100 high net worth individuals have been included in the UK Supplement. For more information, visit www.edelman.com/trust2016.